Numb. 53.

The Female Tatler.

Written by a Society of Ladies.

——*Medium tenuere Beati.*

From Friday November 4, to Monday November 7, 1709.

Emilia's Day.

THE Converſation I met with laſt Night was very diſagreeable, till interrupted by a Diſcourſe we fell into, concerning a Marriage Life, wherein *Eudoxa* rail'd againſt that unhappy State, as ſhe call'd it, that made Women only Slaves to that Tyrant, *Man*. I oppoſed her with that little Reaſon I was Miſtreſs of, and aſſerted, That it was in the Power of Women to Rule if they had a mind, and that they needed not be Subject to the Slavery of Men's Arbitrary Wills, if they were not wanting to themſelves. This occaſion'd much Mirth among the Company at firſt, and my Adverſary Plum'd herſelf extraordinary upon my bold Aſſertion, and ask'd me with a diſdainful Air, *Emilia*, ſays ſhe, I warrant when you are marry'd, you deſign to fight for the Breeches? Not at all my dear *Eudoxa*, ſaid I, ſo far from contending wou'd I be, that he ſhou'd never know I had the Spirit of my Mother *Eve* in me; for I much admire at the Folly, or rather want of Conduct in the Young Ladies of this Age, who can diſſemble their Paſſions for Years together to get a Husband, and yet cannot baulk themſelves a Minute afterwards to get the entire Maſterhead over him. The Company laugh'd heartily at my Extravagance, till I begg'd leave of them to proceed; *Ladies*, continued I, I am glad my Argument can afford you any Diverſion, but ſhou'd be much more ſo, cou'd I perſwade my ſelf you wou'd be inſtructed by it, in order to which I ſhall give you a plain Example, well known to all the Town. *Laura* was the Toaſt that was moſt eſteem'd for a conſiderable time, and no one receiv'd the Addreſſes of the Men with more ſeeming Reluctancy and Ill-Nature, for *Laura* had Wit and Beauty, which ſhe knew how to make uſe of alternately, as they ſerv'd her purpoſe to the beſt Advantage. She was not ſo reſerv'd to deny herſelf the pleaſure of an Intrigue, nor ſo vain to boaſt of it when ſhe came off with Flying Colours: In ſhort, ſhe was the Mark of the Gay and Sprightly, and as much coveted by the Grave and Prudent, among whom *Sagax*, who was Wiſe in Years as well as Knowledge, fix'd his Deſires upon her, and carry'd her from all the Men of Dreſs and Figure. *Sagax* was Moroſe, Jealous and Commanding, and wou'd be obey'd, tho' in a downright Contradiction: The World immediately pronounc'd 'em both Unhappy, pitty'd the Fair *Laura*, but laugh'd at the Imprudent *Sagax*. *Laura* on the contrary, manag'd her Wit with ſo much Conduct, that ſhe laid her Tongue by as an uſeleſs Talent, as long as her Charms were freſh and inviting. *Sagax* found in her the Silent Woman, all Submiſſion and Obedience: If my Lady *Flaſh* invited her to the Park, *Laura* refus'd to go without her Husband's leave. If *Sagax* order'd her to Dreſs, ſhe ask'd what Suit of Cloaths wou'd moſt oblige his Fancy. This mov'd his Jealouſy to pity her obſequious Fondneſs, that from being Auſtere and Awful, he became the moſt obliging condeſcending Husband. *Laura* far from taking Liberty at this, improv'd the Talent to her own Advantage, ſhe ſcorn'd the little Freedom only of doing what ſhe wou'd herſelf, without ſhe cou'd be Miſtreſs o'er her Husband's Actions too, and yet perſwade him and the World he was her Abſolute Lord and Maſter. This is the pleaſanteſt kind of Government, to Rule and yet ſeem to Obey: But pray, ſaid *Eudoxa*, how did the Lady behave herſelf the remaining part of her Life, after ſhe had gain'd an entire Conqueſt over her Husband? No doubt on't but ſhe treated him as diſdainful as he had done her, otherwiſe to what Advantage did ſhe ſtifle her Reſentment, and what got ſhe by her mighty Management, Peace and content of Mind; but I find *Madam*, ſaid I, you are quite miſtaken in your Notions of managing a Husband, and do not ſeem to take the Story; for *Laura* had to do with a Man of Senſe, who, tho' he was to be won, and as I might ſay yok'd with the Artifice of Love and ſeeming Complyance, yet he wou'd eaſily break his Fetters, ſhou'd you endeavour to Chain him by force: But all this while, ſaid *Eudoxa*, this is but Diſſimulation, and not Love: Well *Madam*, anſwer'd I, cou'd you always diſſemble good Nature and Complyance, 'twou'd be the ſame thing as if you was born with it; 'tis a Counterfeit worth more than the Original. But *Madam*, continued I, you ſeem not yet any ways convinc'd, while you talk of treating your Husband diſdainfully again, ſuppoſing he had us'd you ſo before, for this is ſo far from being agreeable to any part of *Laura*'s Example, that it is quite the Reverſe; for while there is the leaſt Oppoſition made, there is no thinking that the Conteſt will ceaſe: Perhaps *Eudoxa* may have more Wit and Beauty than ever *Laura* had, but we find neither Wit nor Beauty, with all the Additions of Fortune added to them, can make a Marriage Life happy, without ſuch an agreeing Temper in a Woman, as can make her Submit and Condeſcend to the unruly governing Tempers of ill-natur'd Men, till they have found out her Blind-ſide, and have Diſcretion enough to keep the Advantage, which is not to be made uſe of only once, but continually, if Women deſire an entire Rule and Maſtery: At the ſame time they are not to crow and diſcover themſelves, but cunningly to feign a Submiſſion while they have the Reins of Government in their Hands, and have Charms of Wit, Beauty, Good Nature or Diſcretion enough to maintain them, or at leaſt ſuch a ſhare of Prudence, as to cover their Folly and Ill-Nature from appearing too monſtrous and deform'd, under the Mask of Wit and Repartee.

Well

Well *Emilia*, ſaid *Eudoxa*, do you think any Woman ſo vers'd in Philoſophy as to be able to maſter their Paſſions ſo far as your Story carries the Point; I don't think any Men ever capable of it, much leſs a Woman, eſpecially in this Age, in which I don't find Learning reckoned ſo conſiderable an Accompliſhment. I grant you that, anſwer'd I, if you take Learning to conſiſt in Languages, which I do not, for it was Cuſtom not Reaſon, that gave the knowledge of Tongues the Title of Learning; the obtaining of which the fine agile Spirits of Children are blunted, and Wit's exchang'd for empty and inſignificant Terms. Children, now like Women, in their more docile Age and ſofter Tempers, take the Impreſſions of Civility and Complyance, are by ſome ignorant Maſter or learned Tutor made inflexible in their Diſpoſitions, or wilful and obſtinate in their Opinions: For ſuch Men as make that kind of Learning their Study, have their Judgments ſo fetter'd by Antiquity, that like Players they dare ſpeak nothing but what their Poets teach 'em. While none have made a greater Progreſs in the Advancement of Knowledge, than thoſe who have paſs'd under the Notion of Libertines, if I may be pardon'd for that Title, given to ſo many Great Men Inventions of too noble a Nature to be learn'd under an Apprentiſhip, and confin'd to the Dogmatical Precepts of Schools, that ſpoil and dead the piquant Taſt of Wit, by confining it to Forms and Sentences. It being impoſſible for a Man to write or behave himſelf agreeable to the juſt Rules of Converſation, who hath not ſpent his Time in better Company than an Academy can afford, and if any Perſon doubt of this, let him bring a meer Scholar into a Ladies Drawing-Room, and he will ſoon be ſatisfied, whether he knows more than *Æſop*'s Aſs, who was beat for fawning upon his Maſter, becauſe the Dog was us'd to do it before: I doubt here the Scholar would fare but little better with the Ladies for his Favours than the Aſs did with his Maſter.

And here I cannot forbear entering upon part of *Lucinda*'s Subject laſt time we met, and whereas ſhe has ſhown, that *Duelling* was neceſſary in a Polite Nation, for the ſame Reaſon it follows, that *Fencing* and *Dancing* muſt conſequently be of great uſe to the forming and poliſhing a fine Gentleman; for the way of *Combate* was the Antient and Legal way of determinating the Right of Lands and Inheritances, wherein Strength and Courage was of the greateſt Importance, which at this day is reduced into an Art, whoſe Profeſs'd Maſters are ſeldom confounded and beated out of their Play, by the greateſt Strength and Activity of their Adverſaries, if ignorant of the Rules; becauſe the one depends upon a Methodical Artificial Direction, and the other is left to the Event of Change and accidental Motion. That part of Dancing I wou'd recommend as neceſſary, is an agreeable Addreſs and Behaviour in Converſation, without which a Man of the beſt Senſe and moſt exquiſite Symetry of Parts, appears awkard and unpoliſh'd; for tho' ſome People may diſpiſe this as Effeminate and below the Conſideration of a Wiſe Man, yet I muſt take the Liberty to inform ſuch, no Man can either be truely agreeable or Polite, that is too Proud to learn of a Woman.

†‡† *A Table of Fame for the Ladies will be Publiſh'd as ſoon as* Materials *can be Collected, to which end, the Publick are deſired to Contribute, and it will be gratefully acknowledg'd.*

†‡† *The Two Officers who lately left Two Ladies in Tears at* Windſor, *with the like Barbarity* Æneas *quitted* Dido, *are deſired to return to their Duty, otherwiſe they will be Caſhier'd.*

†‡† *A Society of Reforming Dancing-Maſters in the City of* London, *have lately ſet up a Civility Clubb, at the Salutation Tavern at* Billingſgate; *where Manners are to be diſpoſed by Wholeſale or Retail, to all Citizens Wives and their Daughters. No Cure no Money.*

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